



Orientation Meeting Two

Leader's Guide to the Travel Journal

Goals and Objectives

To teach Student Ambassadors how to compile a travel journal, a multi-functional tool that allows them to record their travel experiences and keep track of critical contact information during their program. Travel journal assignments are built into the next three meeting agendas.

Travel Tip: Students should store the journal in a Ziploc bag to prevent damage while traveling.

Organization of the travel journal

Make sure that each student has their journal at the orientation meeting and take the time to go over the information listed below regarding journal organization. Instruct students to write their names, delegation number or travel group number on the front cover.

Hotel information and contacts

Have students write down contact information for the delegation manager (name, and phone number), as soon as your group arrives at the airport and meets them. Each time you arrive at a new hotel, remind students to write down the name and number of the hotel, your room number and designated meeting location, in case of an emergency.

Pre-travel

Have your students write at least three pre-travel entries in their journal. Journal topics are listed below. Please refer to the Leader's Meeting Organizer for specific due dates.

Journal entry #1: Think back on your pre-travel phase of any of your previous travel experiences (with People to People Ambassador Programs or your family) and write about the following:

- If you traveled with People to People Ambassador Programs before, what was your community service project and how did that go?
- Within your community, what are some community activities you are involved in?
- Did you make friends with other students easily? If no, what was – or perhaps still is – difficult for you?

Journal entry #2: Reflect on some of the highlights of a previous travel experience.

- What made you want to travel again or for the first time?

Journal entry #3: What are you looking forward to with this travel experience?

- What are you most excited about?
- What are worries you may have?
- What do you expect to be easy?
- What do you expect to be a challenge?

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Journal entry #4: What goals do you have for yourself as a student ambassador and world traveler?

- If you have traveled before, how do these goals differ from your last travel experience?

Journal entry #5: How are final travel preparations progressing?

- What skills are you using for your packing and other final preparations that you learned from your previous travels?
- If this is your first travel experience, where did you learn the skills you are using in packing and preparing for this program?
- How do your pre-travel feelings and perspectives differ from your previous travel experience?

Sharing about yourself

The questions on these pages are great conversation starters and provide a starting point for sharing information about themselves with other delegates, while riding on the coach or as roommates with the home stay family.

Interview with a local

This page provides a list of suggested questions for the students to ask locals to help enrich their travel experience. Students are not required to write any answers here, although they are encouraged to.

Journal topics

This section includes a list of journal prompts to help guide students with their journal writing. The leadership team can decide if they want to assign daily journal topics or, if you prefer, let students choose independently. Some of the topics are more appropriate for days later in the program, after the students have had more travel experience. Remind them of this if they are choosing their own questions. Feel free to elaborate on any of the prompts you assign as you deem appropriate, or to suggest alternate topics.

Travel journal -learning reflections

The first section of the journal entry is a learning reflection page. Students can use this page to note some of the main points they learned during the activities for that day. Suggest that students complete this page as a group on the coach, using a whole group to brainstorm and help students remember and retain what they learned. Alternately, students can work in small groups to complete this page at the end of the day. You can then review it together as a group the next morning. This section can be written as notes, bullet points, words, or phrases. Students should not be evaluated on how clearly they explain what they learned, but on whether or not they recorded relevant points of learning. Look for an average of five learning points per entry.

Journal pages

Here is where the actual journaling takes place. You will be evaluating students on whether or not they met the minimum requirement (see below) and whether or not the content was program-related. Encourage students to write as much as they are inspired to. There are extra pages in the back of the journal should students need them.

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Sketch page

A blank sketch page follows the journal pages for each day. Encourage students to use it to make a different kind of visual record of their experience. You can choose whether to make this a requirement or not.

Maps pages

These pages can be used by students to paste or draw maps of the countries or regions they visit. They can trace the path of their travels or make notes regarding points of interest along the way. Leaders should feel free to make these or other suggestions to delegates or let them decide how to use these pages.

Record of purchases

We've provided templates for students to record their spending as well as write currency exchanges compared to U.S. dollars. This may help them with spending decisions.

Memories

These are provided for students to use as they choose. They can get friends' autographs or paste in mementos such as photos, postcards, ticket stubs, brochures, etc.

Evaluating journals for content

For high school students, journal assignments should be evaluated as part of the academic component of the program. While we hope students do grow as creative writers through your instruction and journal writing, you will evaluate the journal as a Pass or No Pass based on the following content criteria only:

- _____ Did the student write a minimum of one page per day on average?
- _____ Is the content of the student's journal program-related and appropriate for an academic journal?
- _____ Did the student write an average of five learning points per entry in their learning reflection pages?

If the answer to all three questions is "yes", the journal should receive a passing grade. Although they will not receive high school credit, students in grades 5-8 are still expected to complete journals as part of the program requirements.

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What not to evaluate

- Conventions (grammar, spelling, punctuation)
- Quality of artwork
- Voice or style
- Word choice
- Sentence fluency

Share your expertise

Many leaders have experience teaching writing or journal techniques or have experience keeping travel journals. Please share advice, tips, or suggestions with your delegates to help make this the “special” record of their journey that it is intended to be. For example, you might give suggestions on how to use extra pages, how to jot down thoughts, or what memories they’ll want to keep. Share your personal experience in keeping a travel journal. Feel free to give examples and explain why it was valuable for you.

Accommodations for students with disabilities

Students are instructed to inform you if you should take into account any special needs when evaluating their journals. This information will be kept as confidential as possible. It is possible that a student will not share this information with you. Use your best judgment and make accommodations as you see fit. We’ve provided specific guidelines for the travel journal in the form of a handout you can distribute to delegates if you choose. This can be found under *Leader Resources > Orientation Meetings > Orientation Meeting #2* on your leader website.